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SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY (PARA 1 and 3) FEBRUARY 28 MFA PRESS
BRIEFING: UK FOREIGN SECRETARY'S VISIT, IRAN, SIX-PARTY TALKS,
DARFUR, HUMAN RIGHTS, JAPAN DUMPLING CASE

11. Key points at the February 28, 2008 MFA Press Briefing were:

-- CNOOC's role in developing an Iranian gas field is "a business act."

-- Although "there are some problems" in moving the Six-Party Talks forward, all parties are optimistic and have expressed a willingness to honor their commitments.

-- The United States and China should conduct a human rights dialogue with "mutual respect and equality" and Congress should view the objective and beneficial developments of human rights in China.

-- Special Envoy Liu Guijin's visit to Darfur demonstrates China's willingness to strengthen communication and coordination with relevant countries in order to restore peace and improve the humanitarian situation in Sudan.

-- China does not believe the Japanese dumpling issue will impact President Hu's upcoming visit to Japan.

UK Foreign Secretary Miliband's Visit

12. During the February 28 regular MFA press briefing, spokesperson Liu Jianchao began by commenting on UK Foreign Secretary Miliband's visit to Beijing. According to Liu, the UK and China agreed carry out strategic, economic and financial dialogues, to hold a second round of consultations on Africa and to continue their human rights dialogue. Liu said Foreign Secretary Miliband called for intensified UK-China cooperation on regional and international issues, such as UN peacekeeping, nonproliferation and EU-China cooperation, and to discuss the challenges and opportunities of globalization. Liu said Miliband reiterated the UK's one China policy.

CNOOC in Iran and UN Sanctions Proposal

13. When asked if China is concerned about repercussions from the United States concerning China National Offshore Oil Corporation's (CNOOC) role in developing an Iranian gas field, Liu said China considers CNOOC's venture "a business act." China attaches great importance to the Iran nuclear issue and believes dialogue and negotiations are "conducive to peaceful resolution of the issue." China has taken an active role in consultations, he said. The UN Security Council is currently discussing the matter and China hopes Iran will address the concerns of the international community.

Six-Party Talks

14. Liu stated that Secretary Rice discussed the North Korean nuclear issue with President Hu and Premier Wen, and that Assistant Secretary Hill and his Chinese counterparts also discussed the

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matter. China and the other parties have made efforts to implement their commitments even though "there are some problems," Liu said. All parties are optimistic and have expressed a willingness to honor their commitments, said Liu.

U.S. Congressional Hearing on Human Rights

¶5. When asked China's views on a U.S. Congressional hearing on China's human rights record in the lead up to the Olympics, Liu said China's Constitution includes a commitment to protect the human rights of the Chinese people. Liu stated that he hoped the United States and China could conduct a human rights dialogue with "mutual respect and equality" and that Congress could "take off its colored glasses" and view the objective and beneficial developments of human rights in China.

U.S.-China Cooperation on U.S. MIAs

¶6. Responding to a question on United States-China cooperation on U.S. missing-in-action combatants from the Korean War, Liu said that the United States and China have enjoyed "sound cooperation" for many years. Following Vice Chairman Guo Boxiang's visit to the United States in July 2006 and Secretary of Defense Gate's trip to China in November 2007, both countries reached a consensus on joint cooperation. Both sides are discussing the specifics for implementing this consensus, according to Liu.

Special Envoy Liu Guijin's Visit to Darfur

¶7. Responding to a request for a briefing on Special Envoy Liu Guijin's visit to Sudan, Spokesman Liu characterized the visit as an

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expression of China's willingness to strengthen communication, coordination and exchanges with relevant countries in order to restore peace, conduct reconstruction and improve the humanitarian situation in Sudan. Spokesman Liu noted that the Special Envoy met with relevant officials in Khartoum and in Darfur, as well as with the Chinese contingent of military engineers stationed in Sudan. Even though "achievements were made in this visit," the resolution of Sudan's "complicated" situation cannot rest on China, but instead the international community should encourage all relevant groups to implement agreements.

China-Japan Dumpling Issue Should Not Effect Hu Visit

¶8. When asked if the recent poisoned dumpling incident would impact President Hu's planned visit to Japan in April, Liu said China places a high priority on this investigation but considers it an isolated case. China hopes both countries can handle this matter properly by not letting it impact China-Japan relations.

China's Policy towards Sao Tome and Principe

¶9. In response to a question on the possibility of China re-establishing diplomatic ties with Sao Tome and Principe in light of a new government there, Liu said China's consistent policy is non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. If countries adopt the "correct one China policy" then China would respond positively.

Panchen Lama's Role is as a Religious Leader

¶10. In response to a question, Liu said that while he had no information that the Panchen Lama was recently chosen for a political position, the Panchen Lama was chosen and appointed as Tibetan Buddhism's second highest religious leader according to religious rituals. According to Liu, the Panchen Lama enjoys a

"high reputation" and the Chinese Government "believes he could provide a better role in promoting religious undertaking in Tibet."

Nigerian President's Visit

¶11. Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua started his state visit today and in the afternoon will meet President Hu, Liu reported.